With a view to reduce disparity, the Central Government issued guidelines in 1987 for setting up Regional Minimum Wages Advisory Committees. These Committees have made a number of recommendations which include reduction in disparity in minimum wages of different states within a region, setting up inter-state Coordination Council, consultation with neighbouring States while fixing/ revising minimum wages etc. The Central Government also suggested to the State Governments in Februrary, 1999 for constitution of Committees of Officials from adjoining States in order to explore uniformity in minimum wages in the States within a region. The Central Government has mooted the concept of National Floor Level Wage also and has been requesting the State Governments to ensure that in none of the scheduled employments the minimum wage is below the national floor level wage. The floor level wage was fixed initially at Rs. 35/- in 1996. Thereafter it has been revised from time to time, the last revision being made to Rs. 50/-per day *w.e.f.* 1.9.2002.

Plan to check migration from villages

†2425. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any national plan to check migration of people from villages to cities;

(b) whether Government have formulated any effective policy to reduce the increasing rate of unemployment in the villages;

(c) if so, whether Government have made any assessment of the increasing number of unemployed persons in the villages; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) The Government has no specific plan to check the migration of people from villages to cities.

(b) The Special Group headed by Dr. S. P. Gupta, Member, Planning Commission was constituted to suggest strategy and programme for creation of one crore employment opportunities per year during each year of the 10th Plan period. The Group proposed creation of 5 crore

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

opportunities over the 10th Plan period. Out of these, nearly 2 crore have to come from specific employment generation programmes and 3 crore from growth buoyancy. The special employment generation programme will be implemented in the rural area also.

Government is also implementing special programmes for eradication of poverty and generation of employment in the rural areas. These include Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SJGSY), Jawahar Gram Smriddhi Yojana (JGSY), Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) and Food for work programme. These schemes/programmes are expected to reduce the incidence of unemployment/underemployment in rural areas as also to check migration of people from villages to cities.

(c) and (d) As per the estimates available from labour force surveys of National Sample Survey Organisation estimated number of unemployed persons in rural areas has gone up from approximately 3.35 million in 1993-94 to 4.38 million in 1999-2000.

Impact of liberalisation

†2426. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that consequent upon new economic policy, near about one lac factories have been closed down throughout the country and almost one crore labourers have lost their jobs;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken in the interest of the labourers in this age of economic liberalisation; and

(d) whether labour laws providing justice to the labourers would be made more effective, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) and (b) According to information provided by Labour Bureau, 2165 industrial units have closed down and approximately 1.57 lakh workers have been affected since 1992.

(c) and (d) Safeguards are provided under various labour legislations

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.